

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 IO-13 ISO-00 AID-05 TRSE-00

L-03 FRB-03 OMB-01 ITC-01 SP-02 AGRE-00 CIAE-00

COME-00 INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 OIC-02 EPG-02

SIL-01 STR-04 CEA-01 NSC-05 SS-15 DODE-00 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 /096 W

-----064270 150814Z /23

O R 150750Z JUL 77

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9379

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 10628

USOECD

USMTN

USEEC

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EFIN, UNCTAD, JA

SUBJECT: UNCTAD AND DEBT

REF: STATE 160950

1. SUMMARY: IN RESPONSE PRESENTATION REFTEL, JAPANESE AGREED THAT IN PRINCIPLE, UNCTAD'S INVOLVEMENT IN LDC DEBT QUESTION SHOULD GO NO FARTHER THAN A MONITORING FUNCTION, BUT THEY SAY THAT IN PRACTICE MORE ACTIVISTIC BEHAVIOR IS LIKELY TO BE IMPOSSIBLE TO PREVENT. FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS EXPECT U.S. AND JAPANESE POSITIONS TO COINCIDE NEXT WEEK. WE MAY AFTERWARDS DIFFER, THEY INDICATED, "ON TACTICS". END SUMMARY.

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2. EMBOFF MADE PRESENTATION BASED REFTEL JULY 13 TO FONMIN OFFICIALS (UNITED NATIONS BUREAU ECONOMIC AFFAIRS DEPUTY DIVISION DIRECTOR TANABE, AND TANAKA OF SAME DIVISION) TANABE SAID THAT JAPAN FAVORS KEEPING DEBT DISCUSSION WITHIN BOUNDS OF UNCTAB IV RESOLUTION 94 (IV), AND HE SHOWDD AN AWARENESS OF THE DANGERS WHICH TOO MUCH UNCTAD INVOLVEMENT MIGHT PRESENT FOR FUTURE PRIVATE LENDING TO DEVELOPING NATIONS. HE INDICTED, HOWEVER,

THAT GOJ BELIEVES OCTOBER DEBT MEETING, AS RESULT OF DECISION MADE BETWEEN SECRETARIAT AND REGIONAL DELEGATION LEADERS, IS CERTAIN TO OCCUR, AND HE STRESSED FACT THAT G-77 GOVERNMENTS "CANNOT BE PREVENTED FROM" RAISING DEBT POLICY QUESTIONS. HE IS SURE JAPANESE AND AMERICAN POSITIONS WILL COINCIDE NEXT WEEK, HE SAID, ALTHOUGH AT OCTOBER MEETING SOME DIFFERENCES MAY POSSIBLY EMERGE.

3. TANABE NOTED THAT IT IS DIFFICULT FOR JAPAN TO "STAND ALONE", EVEN TOGETHER WITH THE UNITED STATES, AGAINST A VERY WIDELY HELD POSITION LIKE THAT OF THE LDCS ON THE DEBT ISSUE. TANAKA IN THIS CONNECTION REFERRED TO TDY DECISION 149-16 AT THE OCTOBER 1976 MEETING, AT WHICH THE AMERICANS, HE ARGUED, HAD SURPRISED THE JAPANESE WITH OUR FLEXIBILITY IN AGREEING TO REVIEW ACTIONS TAKEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH UNCTAD IV'S EXCESSIVELY BROAD RESOLUTION 98 (IV).

4. TANABE EXPRESSED DOUBT WHETHER WE COULD HOLD INDEFINITELY TO OUR PRESENT POSITION ON LDC DEBT. HE ASSERTED THAT DEBT ISSUE IS AT THE MOMENT THE ONLY NORTH-SOUTH PROBLEM ON WHICH IT APPEARS PRACTICAL FOR DCS TO MAKE A MAJOR CONCESSION. EMBOFF NOTED THAT WE BELIEVE INCREASING AID IS A WISER APPROACH AND THAT OUR POSITION, AS REFLECTING WHAT WE HONESTLY BELIEVE ARE BEST INTERESTS OF LDCS THEMSELVES, MAY ULTIMATELY ATTRACT SUPPORT FROM THEM.

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5. COMMENT: TANABE SAID THAT JAPAN AND UNITED STATES DIFFER ON THIS ISSUE IN TACTICS BUT NOT IN STRATEGY. WHAT CAME ACROSS MOST CLEARLY, HOWEVER, WAS USUAL JAPANESE WISH TO GO WITH CROWD ON ISSUE WHICH SEEMS NOT TO TOUCH IMMEDIATE JAPANESE INTERESTS. MANSFIELD

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